UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/684
22 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

EIGHTEENTH PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN LIBERIA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1059 (1996) of 31 May 1996, by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) until 31 August 1996 and requested me to keep it closely informed of the situation in that country. The present report provides an update on developments in Liberia since my report of 21 May 1996 (S/1996/362) and contains recommendations concerning the future role of UNOMIL in Liberia.

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

2. It will be recalled that on 7 May 1996, during their meeting in Accra, the Foreign Ministers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) adopted a Mechanism for Returning Liberia to the Abuja Agreement and indicated that the ECOWAS Heads of State would take a decision, at their forthcoming summit, on the future role of ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia. This decision would be based on progress made in the implementation of the Accra Mechanism, which included, inter alia, the following steps: an immediate cease-fire; the simultaneous withdrawal of fighters from and deployment of ECOMOG in Monrovia; the removal of arms from the city; the return of vehicles and other equipment looted from UNOMIL, the United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations; the re-establishment of the authority and cohesiveness of the Council of State; the revitalization of plans for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and the settlement of the issues involved in the return to Liberia of General Roosevelt Johnson, the leader of a wing of the United Liberation Movement for Democracy (ULIMO-J).

3. The initiatives taken by ECOWAS led to the restoration of a cease-fire in Monrovia on 26 May, after nearly two months of hostilities in the city. With the exception of the withdrawal of armed fighters from Monrovia, the factions have failed to take the further steps necessary to reconcile their differences.

During its summit in Yaoundé, from 8 to 10 July 1996, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) condemned the faction leaders for the breakdown of the peace process and warned that unless they returned to the Abuja Agreement, OAU would support the imposition of sanctions against them and consider requesting the United Nations Security Council to establish a war crimes tribunal for Liberia.

ECOWAS Summit, 26 and 27 July 1996

4. My Special Envoy for Liberia, James O. C. Jonah, and my Special Representative, Anthony Nyakyi, as well as the OAU Eminent Person for Liberia, Canaan Banana, attended the Summit of ECOWAS Heads of State, convened in Abuja on 26 and 27 July 1996, and the preparatory ministerial level meeting that preceded the Summit. My Special Envoy reported that the ECOWAS Heads of State strongly condemned the factions leaders for their continued inability to settle the conflict peacefully and expressed their increasing impatience with the Liberian situation. The Heads of State nevertheless remained committed to finding a peaceful solution.

5. ECOWAS discussed the idea of restructuring the Council of State and holding early elections, following substantial disarmament of the factions, as a means of breaking the impasse in the peace process. They also discussed the idea of adopting sanctions to be imposed against recalcitrant faction leaders and their supporters. There was a general consensus that these ideas should be explored further. Accordingly, the ECOWAS Heads of State requested their Foreign Ministers to meet again, before 18 August, to deliberate on these ideas and work out the modalities for their implementation. While ECOWAS endorsed the draft status-of-forces agreement for ECOMOG, it was decided that the signing of the document would take place only with a restructured Council of State. At the end of the Summit, Sani Abacha, the Head of State of Nigeria, was elected as the Chairman of ECOWAS. He succeeded President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana who had served as the Chairman of ECOWAS since July 1994.

6. Although the faction leaders did not participate in the ECOWAS meetings, General Abacha met them on 30 July, upon the conclusion of the summit. Thereafter, they issued a statement indicating their agreement to end immediately and unconditionally all hostilities throughout Liberia, to disengage their forces, to dismantle all checkpoints and to disarm by the end of September 1996.

7. In the period leading up to the second ECOWAS meeting, the faction leaders made a number of public statements reiterating their commitment to the peace process. Nevertheless, while some checkpoints were dismantled, the leaders failed to meet the commitments they entered into on 30 July 1996. They also failed to convene a meeting of the Council of State, which has not met since the outbreak of hostilities on 6 April, or to demonstrate the cohesiveness necessary to facilitate a return to the peace process. Their views on the issues discussed during the 26 and 27 July ECOWAS Summit continued to differ, in particular with regard to the need to restructure the Council of State, the question of full disarmament before elections and the organization of early elections.

8. During the reporting period, a number of civilian groups met to discuss their concerns regarding the restoration of the peace process. These groups included the Liberian National Conference, the National Council of Elders for Peace and Unity for Liberia, the Liberians United for Democracy, the Liberia National Students Union, the Federation of Liberian Youth, the Union of Former Legislators of Liberia, the Interests Group of Liberia, the Liberian Alternative at Work for Peace and Democracy and the Press Union of Liberia. These organizations called on the factions to disarm and on the Council of State to de-factionalize government ministries and institutions, as well as the Electoral Commission, as conditions for holding free and fair elections.

ECOWAS Summit, 17 August 1996

9. The ECOWAS Foreign Ministers met in Abuja on 14 August to work out the modalities for restoring the peace process. My Special Envoy and my Special Representative, as well as the OAU Eminent Person for Liberia and the Special Envoy of the Former ECOWAS Chairman, Kojo Tsikata, attended these meetings. A number of Liberian civilian groups and all faction leaders, including Roosevelt Johnson, were present in Abuja for the meetings and were fully consulted by ECOWAS in the course of its deliberations.

10. The Foreign Ministers agreed on a new timetable for the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, starting with the restoration of the cease-fire by 31 August 1996 and concluding with the holding of free and fair elections on 30 May 1997 and the installation of a new government on 15 June 1997 (see annex I). They recommended that the revised timetable be divided into five stages with a built-in monitoring mechanism to ensure its strict compliance. At every stage, ECOWAS would verify that the necessary steps had been implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement and its timetable. Any person or group found responsible for obstructing the implementation of the Agreement would be subject to the imposition of sanctions by ECOWAS. Such sanctions would include, inter alia, restrictions on travel and imports and freezing of business activities and assets in the subregion. The Foreign Ministers also recommended that a code of conduct be established for members of the Council of State and transitional government.

11. The Foreign Ministers discussed the conditions to be met in order to hold free and fair elections, including, inter alia: an unequivocal agreement by those contesting the elections to respect their outcome; a fair electoral law, including the basis of representation; the creation of a level playing field to ensure that all parties would have fair and equal access to voters and that civil society would be able to publicize its views; an independent electoral commission; adequate post-election constitutional guarantees for protecting the interest of political minorities and a basic level of security to permit the fulfilment of these conditions.

12. In their review of the situation in Liberia, the Foreign Ministers noted that the country's security agencies had become factionalized and endorsed the proposal to seek assistance from donors for the restructuring of the armed forces, police and other security institutions.

13. In meetings held on 15 and 16 August, the faction leaders and Liberian civilian groups agreed to the decisions reached by the ECOWAS Foreign Ministers, as well as the need to appoint a new Chairperson of the Council of State.

14. In their meeting on 17 August, the ECOWAS Heads of State endorsed the decisions taken by the Foreign Ministers and the designation of Ruth Perry, a former Senator from Grand Cape Mount county and a former member of the Transitional Legislative Assembly, as the new Chairperson of the Council of State. The ECOWAS Heads of State also agreed not to recognize any government that came to power in Liberia through the use of force. They called for the full enforcement of the arms embargo and decided that they would, if and when necessary, call on the United Nations Security Council to impose visa restrictions on recalcitrant faction leaders. They also endorsed the decision of the Foreign Ministers to seek the assistance of the United Nations in the organization of elections in Liberia.

III. MILITARY ASPECTS

Status of the cease-fire in Monrovia

15. The cease-fire in Monrovia, which was re-established on 26 May 1996 with the deployment of ECOMOG throughout the city, is generally holding. ECOMOG reported that, by the end of May, between 70 and 80 per cent of the fighters of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and Alhaji Kromah's wing of ULIMO had withdrawn from the city. However, many of these fighters remain on the outskirts of the city and as many as 4,000 NPFL fighters have reportedly assembled at Kakata, some 55 kilometres north of Monrovia.

16. The withdrawal of ULIMO-J and Liberian Peace Council (LPC) fighters from Monrovia was more difficult, as they argued that their strongholds in Tubmanburg, Todee, Kakata and Bong Mines, to which they were to withdraw, were insecure. On 11 June, however, about 60 ULIMO-J and 120 LPC fighters gave up their arms to ECOMOG. Most of these fighters reportedly remained in Monrovia, albeit unarmed, while others moved towards Grand Cape county (see map attached as annex III).

17. ECOMOG has launched a cordon and search operation in and around Monrovia to collect the arms left behind by the factions upon their withdrawal from the city. UNOMIL is verifying this process and is assisting ECOMOG to keep a systematic record of the weapons collected and in making arrangements for their storage. To date, ECOMOG has collected some 515 assorted rifles and 47 sub-machine-guns, as well as other small arms and ammunition.

Status of the cease-fire outside Monrovia

18. Despite the relative calm in Monrovia, hostilities continued in the south-east and west during the reporting period. The two wings of ULIMO remain engaged in Bomi and Grand Cape Mount counties, particularly in the areas of Tubmanburg and Robertsport. Hostilities also continued between NPFL and LPC in the south-east and reports were received of NPFL incursions into the LPC

stronghold of Greenville. Fighting between NPFL and LPC occasionally spilled over the border into Côte d'Ivoire.

19. The Cease-fire Violations Committee, which is chaired by UNOMIL, has met on a regular basis to address reports of continued hostilities, as well as the fighting that occurred in Monrovia in April and May 1996. The work of the Committee has, however, been frustrated by the lack of cooperation of some factions. The NPFL continues to maintain that its actions in Monrovia and the south-east were taken on behalf of the Government and do not constitute a violation of the cease-fire. The NPFL has not, therefore, attended meetings of the Cease-fire Violations Committee.

Deployment of UNOMIL

20. As noted in my last report, with the outbreak of hostilities and breakdown of the peace process on 6 April, all but 15 of the 93 UNOMIL military observers deployed in Liberia at that time were repatriated. Initially, 5 military observers, including the Chief Military Observer, remained in Monrovia and 10 military observers were kept on standby in Freetown. Since then, 5 additional military observers have been redeployed to Monrovia, while those on standby in Freetown have been repatriated, leaving a total strength of 10 military observers in Liberia (see annex II).

21. The Chief Military Observer of UNOMIL, Major-General Mahmoud Talah (Egypt), completed his tour of duty on 31 May. Until such time as a substantial increase in UNOMIL military strength is required, the Mission's military component will be headed by an Acting Chief Military Observer, Colonel David Magomere (Kenya).

22. During the period under review, UNOMIL increased the frequency and area covered by its patrols. UNOMIL now conducts regular patrols to Kakata and Buchanan and has also patrolled as far north as Gbarnga. Efforts to reach Tubmanburg have failed owing to continued insecurity in the area and lack of cooperation from the factions.

23. As noted above, during the meetings of the ECOWAS Heads of State on 17 August, the factions recommitted themselves to cease all hostilities, disengage their forces and disarm. In view of these agreements and the improved security in many parts of Liberia, I intend to immediately deploy an additional 24 military observers to Liberia in order to re-establish a UNOMIL presence in Buchanan, Kakata and Suehn, to provide the Mission with a capacity to verify any disarmament which may take place and to undertake more frequent and widespread patrolling activities. I also intend to deploy to Liberia a disarmament adviser to assist UNOMIL and ECOMOG to prepare for the eventual disarmament of the factions, in particular with regard to the logistic requirements involved.

24. The further expansion of UNOMIL, even at a modest level, remains severely constrained by the extensive looting of its equipment and vehicles during the hostilities of April and May. However, the recent redeployment of one of the two UNOMIL helicopters will provide essential air support for the Mission and assist it in monitoring the cease-fire and disengagement of forces.

Deployment of ECOMOG

25. The ECOMOG Field Commander, Major-General J. Inienger (Nigeria), is expected to have completed his tour of duty and handed over his command on 21 August to a new Field Commander, Major-General Victor Malu (Nigeria). ECOMOG also recently appointed a new Chief of Staff and rotated several battalions. During the reporting period, ECOMOG reasserted its control over Monrovia and its environs and is presently deployed as far north as Kakata, the Po river to the west and Buchanan to the east.

26. During a meeting of the ECOWAS Chiefs of Staff in Abuja on 13 August, the Field Commander reported that ECOMOG continues to suffer from manpower and logistic constraints and would require substantial additional resources to be able to maintain peace and security in Monrovia and respond to any tasks involved in a new schedule for the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, including disarmament and the creation of secure conditions for elections. He reported that minimum requirements for ECOMOG to carry out its responsibilities included an acceptable level of communication between units and bases; availability of power generation facilities, especially in remote areas; and additional trucks and air support to ensure adequate mobility of troops.

27. Many ECOWAS Chiefs of Staff indicated the desire of their Governments to contribute additional troops to ECOMOG, but stated they would require logistic support in order to do so. In this connection the following countries offered troops: Ghana (one battalion); Niger (between a company and a battalion); Burkina Faso (one reduced battalion); Gambia (a limited company); and Côte d'Ivoire (50 medical and paramedical personnel). Benin and Togo also expressed interest in providing troops for ECOMOG.

IV. SECURITY ASPECTS

28. Despite substantial improvement since the restoration of the cease-fire in Monrovia, the security situation in the city remains a cause for concern. UNOMIL has recently observed an increase in the number of unarmed fighters in Monrovia and has reported that the city is now divided along factional lines. In addition, despite ECOMOG efforts to collect arms hidden in the city, it is believed that many arms caches still exist.

29. Furthermore, recent weeks have witnessed a new wave of violence in Monrovia, some of which may have been politically motivated. On 7 August, a member of the Transitional Legislative Assembly from Bomi county was assassinated. Also on 7 August, the Deputy Foreign Minister (ULIMO-K appointee) was kidnapped near the Barclay Training Centre. He was later released after the intervention of ECOMOG. In addition, during the first week of August, two young women associated with ULIMO-J, LPC and AFL were killed in the Congotown section of Monrovia, which is an NPFL/ULIMO-K stronghold. On 10 August, a shooting incident also occurred in downtown Monrovia between two ULIMO-J generals following a quarrel over looted goods.

30. Although United Nations personnel were not deliberately targeted during the hostilities, they still risk becoming victims of armed assault or being caught

in crossfire. In order to assist UNOMIL and the United Nations agencies revise their joint security and evacuation plan, a technical team from the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator visited Liberia from 15 to 21 June. Given the limited means of evacuation from Monrovia and precarious security situation, UNOMIL maintained a restricted strength of international civilian personnel and military observers during the reporting period. However, in view of recent progress in the peace process, and as noted in other sections of the present report, I intend to deploy to Liberia additional essential military and civilian personnel to assist UNOMIL to respond to developments on the ground. The Mission's security and evacuation plans will be adjusted accordingly to ensure that all personnel are able to operate in conditions of safety and security.

31. The Security Council is aware of the extensive looting that took place during the recent hostilities in Monrovia. A total of 489 vehicles, valued at $8,313,342, were taken from UNOMIL, the United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. My Special Representative has written to the Chairman of the Council of State on several occasions, demanding that the Transitional Government take action to retrieve the looted vehicles. He has also conveyed this demand to Charles Taylor, Alhaji Kromah and ULIMO-J senior officials. However, despite the assurances given by the faction leaders, only 11 vehicles have been recovered. The return of United Nations looted property also remains a concern of ECOMOG. Unfortunately, the factions have not cooperated with ECOMOG in its attempts to retrieve looted vehicles. During its recent meeting in Abuja, ECOWAS decided that the faction leaders should be held fully responsible for the looted vehicles and called on them to return them to their rightful owners.

V. HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES

32. The April/May fighting in Monrovia, in which the Ministry of Health estimated that 3,000 persons died, has had a profound effect on the humanitarian situation and on humanitarian operations in Liberia. Disregard for the Principles and Protocols of Humanitarian Operations, lack of free access by the humanitarian community to populations in need, as well as the deliberate abuse of internationally recognized conventions of human and child rights, remain the primary constraints on humanitarian operations in Liberia.

33. A study of Monrovia by the United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Office in June confirmed that approximately 50 per cent of the population (361,880 persons) had fled their homes, as a result of the hostilities in April and May. Of these, 30 per cent moved to shelters in the city, while 17 per cent fled Monrovia and/or the country. Overcrowding in safer parts of the city led to a deterioration of sanitary conditions and increased vulnerability of the population to epidemic diseases, including cholera. A nutritional survey carried out by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and a group of non-governmental organizations in July revealed an increase in malnutrition rates of 15.3 and 24.7 per cent for children in resident and displaced persons shelters respectively.

34. The systematic looting of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations during the hostilities severely affected their ability to respond effectively to humanitarian needs throughout the country. Appeals to faction leaders to return vehicles and other assets have gone largely unheeded. The humanitarian situation in the hinterland is virtually unknown since insecurity and the loss of operational means have prevented the humanitarian community from accessing these areas. Nevertheless, the humanitarian community has, within its means, responded to needs in a timely and effective manner and, to the extent possible, increased its area of coverage. The United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Office has led cross-line assessment missions to the Nimba and Upper Lofa counties. Up-country deliveries have been made from Monrovia to Bong, Margibi and Montserrado counties and cross-border operations have been undertaken from Côte d'Ivoire into parts of Nimba and Bong counties. The Buchanan area has, until recently, been kept supplied with relief items using boats.

35. While Monrovia and some counties are accessible, fighting continues to impede access to other areas in the west and east of the country. Ongoing fighting between the two wings of ULIMO in Bomi county has compelled over 5,000 people to flee to the outskirts of Monrovia, where many of them, in an advanced degree of malnutrition, have been assisted by humanitarian agencies. Because of insecure conditions and lack of cooperation from the factions, the humanitarian community has not been able to deliver food and medical supplies to the civilian population trapped in Tubmanburg. Furthermore, some factions continue to control the movement of civilians under the pretext of protecting them - a practice that subjects innocent civilians to extremely harsh conditions. Following extensive negotiations, 500 malnourished civilians were recently allowed to leave the area of Suehn.

36. Fighting in both Monrovia and outlying counties has triggered new outflows of refugees into neighbouring countries. Unfortunately, some countries of the subregion, already overburdened by large numbers of Liberian refugees, have begun to turn away those seeking asylum in their territories. The fighting in Monrovia has equally affected the estimated 120,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) presently has access only to an estimated 15,000 refugees from Sierra Leone, who reside in various shelters in and around Monrovia. UNHCR is currently working out modalities for the repatriation of some 5,000 refugees who have expressed their desire to return to Sierra Leone.

37. Given that the operational capacity of the factions has been enhanced by the looting of equipment and vehicles and a safe working environment has yet to be restored, the non-governmental organization community has decided to limit its operations to targeted life-saving activities. The United Nations agencies have taken a similar stance, but have agreed to maintain operations in certain critical areas, including alleviation of hunger and malnutrition; prevention of diseases through sanitation, water purification and immunization; provision of basic education; protection of refugees; and support for displaced persons, children, women and other vulnerable groups. These operating positions have been endorsed by the Inter-agency Standing Committee. In addition, the Catholic Church in Liberia, which operates the largest education system in the country apart from that of the Government, has closed its education and health systems,

with the exception of the main Catholic Hospital, until free and fair elections are held. These positions have a far-reaching effect on the level of delivery of humanitarian assistance in the country and the ability of the humanitarian community to respond effectively in providing assistance related to the revitalization of the peace process. As the security situation improves, however, these positions will be revised and activities gradually increased.

VI. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

38. The cautious expansion in socio-economic activities that occurred after the signing of the Abuja Accord in August 1995 suffered a serious setback as a result of the recent hostilities. Most United Nations agency activities geared towards rehabilitation, reconstruction and development have come to a virtual standstill. Commercial activities have dropped to an all-time low and the prices of available commodities have skyrocketed. The price of rice, the staple food of Liberia, has tripled and the price of gasoline has fluctuated violently, reaching a peak of 20 times the pre-April price. The parallel exchange rate of the Liberian dollar against the United States dollar increased by 75 per cent and, as at 2 August 1996, only three of the six major banks providing services in Liberia before the 6 April fighting had reopened.

39. The fighting resulted in the massive destruction and looting of capital assets and physical infrastructure. Hospitals, clinics, offices of both national and international organizations, as well as an estimated 30 per cent of houses in central Monrovia, were destroyed. The impact of the crisis on the public sector has been disastrous. Government facilities, including assets donated by donors and United Nations agencies, were systematically looted. While some government ministries and agencies have tried to reopen, they suffer from a lack of manpower and resources necessary to deliver even basic services. The salaries of civil servants have not been paid since before the crisis, resulting in increasing absenteeism of government employees. Many professionals and businessmen fled the country in the wake of the crisis and the impact of the drain of human resources has severely affected the Liberian economy.

40. Nevertheless, many civilians in Monrovia appear to be coping with the impact of the crisis through petty trading and the mutual support system of the extended family tradition. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is preparing a series of socio-economic impact studies to document the effects of the recent fighting on the civilian population in Monrovia and the economy in general. Various subsector studies in areas crucial for future reintegration, rehabilitation and resettlement will follow. These follow-up studies are intended to rebuild the database to facilitate planning for the reintegration, rehabilitation and resettlement process, if and when conditions in Liberia improve and allow such a transition.

VII. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

41. The cost of maintaining UNOMIL at its present reduced strength is approximately $1 million per month. The General Assembly, in its decision 50/482 of 7 June 1996, authorized me to utilize the resources currently

available to UNOMIL for its maintenance through 30 September 1996, subject to the extension of the mandate by the Council and requested me to present a revised budget for UNOMIL for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997.

42. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNOMIL as envisaged in paragraph 51 below, the cost for the maintenance of UNOMIL will be reflected in my revised budget to be submitted to the Assembly.

43. As at 31 July 1996, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNOMIL special account since the inception of the Mission totalled $10.8 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peace-keeping operations as at 31 July 1996 amounted to $2,176.4 million.

44. Since my last report, there have been no further voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Liberia.

VIII. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

45. Liberia has suffered a tremendous ordeal since hostilities erupted on 6 April 1996. Thousands of lives have been lost, hundreds of families displaced and the city of Monrovia and its fledgling economy have been largely destroyed. Yet the successful outcome of the 17 August ECOWAS Summit offers some hope for the restoration of the peace process. During the Summit, the Liberian civilian community came together to ensure its views were heard in deciding the future of the country. ECOWAS and the other facilitators of the peace process, including UNOMIL and the mediation team of Ambassadors from Nigeria, Guinea, Sierra Leone and the United States, once again demonstrated their ability to coordinate their efforts in seeking to resolve the Liberian conflict. Finally, ECOWAS adopted a number of new and far-reaching measures to ensure the effective implementation of the peace process.

46. Under the new timetable for the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, the faction leaders agreed to cease all hostilities throughout the country and to disarm so that free and fair elections can be held by the end of May 1997. They have reached many similar agreements in the past, only to renege on each of them. However, the measures adopted by ECOWAS for the periodic review of progress in the implementation of the Agreement, the formulation of a code of conduct for members of the Council of State and transitional government and the decision to impose sanctions against any party not in compliance with these measures will encourage the faction leaders to live up to their commitments.

47. I welcome the designation of a new Chairperson of the Council of State. This appointment, which was made largely at the insistence of Liberian civilian groups, demonstrates the growing influence of Liberian civilian society in the peace process. It will also help to encourage the Council of State to act as an impartial governing body, in accordance with the provisions of the Abuja Agreement.

48. The steps recently taken by ECOMOG to reinvigorate its presence in Liberia and ensure its viability as an effective peace-keeping force represent another positive development in the Liberian peace process. These efforts could be

compromised, however, if ECOMOG is not provided with additional manpower, as well as with adequate and dependable financial and logistic resources, necessary to carry out its tasks. The Government of the United States has recently renewed its pledge of an additional $30 million in support for ECOMOG, part of which has already been committed. Further assistance is urgently required if the tight implementation schedule agreed upon by ECOWAS is to be adhered to. I therefore urge potential donor countries to support ECOMOG and to provide concrete assistance for the peace-keeping force as soon as possible.

49. ECOWAS, the Liberian civilian groups and faction leaders have expressed an interest in seeking assistance from the United Nations for the electoral process. The type of assistance expected from the United Nations has not yet been defined, although some have suggested that the United Nations should play an enhanced role in the organization and conduct of the elections. The holding of free and fair elections requires that a number of conditions, as noted in paragraph 11 above, are fulfilled. While these conditions were discussed at the ECOWAS Summit, the modalities for their implementation are still to be worked out. Among other things, the electoral law must be reviewed, the basis of representation decided upon, and the question of the Electoral Commission addressed to ensure its full independence.

50. Under its present mandate, provided under resolution 1020 (1995) of 10 November 1995, UNOMIL is to observe and verify the election process, in consultation with OAU and ECOWAS, including the legislative and presidential elections to be held in accordance with the provisions of the peace agreements. My Special Envoy has made it clear to both ECOWAS and the members of the Council of State that, in accordance with established procedure, any change in the electoral mandate of UNOMIL would only be considered on the basis of an official request defining the type of assistance sought from the Organization. He also stressed that such a change would have to be approved by the Security Council.

51. ECOWAS has renewed its commitment to restoring peace and a democratically elected government in Liberia and to remain engaged in that country until a new government is installed on 15 June 1997, in accordance with the revised timetable of the Abuja Agreement. I fully support the endeavours of ECOWAS and, in the light of its renewed commitment to the peace process, I recommend that the Security Council consider extending the mandate of UNOMIL for a period of three months. During that time, I will continue to monitor the situation in Liberia closely. Should the factions demonstrate their full commitment to the peace process, it would be my intention to provide to the Security Council by mid-October recommendations on any enhanced United Nations role that may be needed to support the efforts of ECOWAS and create conditions conducive to peace, stability and national reconciliation in Liberia.

52. In the meantime, I intend to deploy to Liberia an additional 24 military observers, as well as additional essential civilian personnel in the fields of disarmament, elections, human rights and public information, as well as administration, to assist UNOMIL to respond to developments on the ground. Should the pace of implementation of the military provisions of the Abuja Agreement necessitate a further increase in the military strength of UNOMIL, I would consider the deployment of some additional military observers, within the

Mission's currently authorized strength of 160 and inform the Security Council accordingly in my mid-October report.

53. The ECOWAS States are clearly frustrated with the situation in Liberia and the lack of cooperation they have received from the faction leaders in their long endeavour to bring peace to that country. Nevertheless, they have decided to give the factions one last chance to take the steps necessary to restore a democratically elected government in Liberia. I urge the faction leaders to remember the precedent of Somalia and hope they seize this opportunity to restore peace in their country. For if they do not, the international community may have no choice but to disengage from Liberia.

Annex I

Revised schedule of implementation of the Abuja Agreement

20-31 August 1996	Cease-fire, disengagement of factions from checkpoints and present combat positions
1 September- 30 November 1996	Delivery of logistic supplies by the international/donor community to ECOMOG
20 August 1996- 31 January 1997	Verification of the cease-fire and disengagement by ECOMOG, UNOMIL and the Liberian National Transitional Government
3-10 October 1996	Assessment meeting in Liberia by the Chairman's Special Envoy with ECOMOG, UNOMIL, representatives of the donor community and the Liberian National Transitional Government
12 October 1996- 31 January 1997	Reconnaissance mission by ECOMOG and UNOMIL of arms collection centres
4-8 November 1996	Committee of Nine Meeting a/ (Ministerial) in Monrovia
7 November 1996- 31 January 1997	Deployment of ECOMOG to agreed safe havens by the Committee of Nine
22 November 1996- 31 January 1997	Disarmament, demobilization and repatriation
6-13 January 1997	Verification visit to Liberia by the Chairman's Special Envoy with ECOMOG, UNOMIL, representatives of the donor community and the Liberian National Transitional Government
20 January- 15 April 1997	Preparation for elections
10-15 March 1997	Committee of Nine Meeting, Monrovia
17-24 April 1997	Assessment visit to Liberia by the Chairman's Special Envoy with ECOMOG, UNOMIL, representatives of the donor community and the Liberian National Transitional Government
30 May 1997	Election Day

---

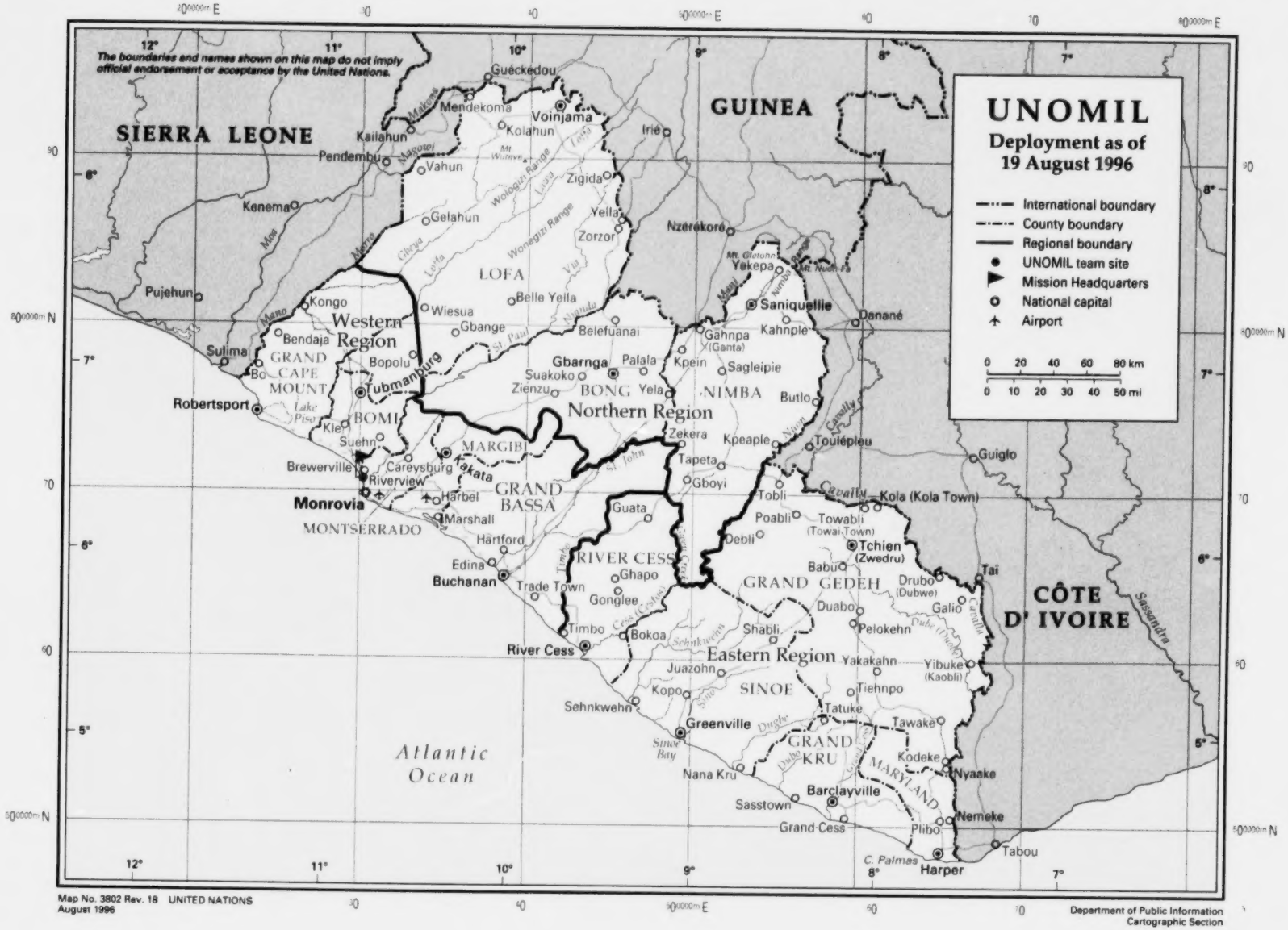
a/ The ECOWAS Committee of Nine is comprised of those ECOWAS member States most directly involved in the resolution of the Liberian conflict (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo).

Note. The new schedule of implementation of the Abuja Agreement also provides for the dissolution of all factions by 31 January 1997, resignation by 28 February 1997 of the members of the Council of State and public office holders who wish to run for election. The new government is expected to be sworn in on 15 June 1997.

Annex II

Composition of the military component of UNOMIL as at 21 August 1996

Bangladesh	1
Egypt	1
India	3
Kenya	2
Malaysia	1
Pakistan	2
Total	10



Map No. 3802 Rev. 18 UNITED NATIONS
August 1996

Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section